

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 A-01 OPR-01 SY-04 IO-10 NIC-01 SCCT-01

COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 CU-02 EURE-00 /090 W

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1592

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS PINT PO

SUBJ: VICTOR ALVES PRESS CONFERENCE

REF: (A) LISBON 554 (NOTAL) (B) LISBON 553 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: VICTOR ALVES HELD PRESS CONFERENCE JANUARY 30, RESPONDING TO WIDE RANGE OF QUESTIONS. PRINCIPAL THEME WAS HOW GOP WOULD HANDLE RALLIES SCHEDULED FOR JAN 31. RESPONSES BY ALVES AND AIDES DEMONSTRATED GOP'S SENSITIVITY TO CRITICISM AND SCRUTINY FROM FOREIGN PRESS. END SUMMARY.

JANUARY 31 RALLIES

1. PRINCIPAL TOPIC RAISED REPEATEDLY AT JAN 30 PRESS CONFERENCE BY MIN WITHOUT PORTFOLIO VICTOR ALVES WAS RALLIES SET FOR JAN 31 (REF A). IN ANNOUNCING RALLIES' CANCEL-
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LATION, ALVES JUSTIFIED ACT PRIMARILY ON BASIS THREAT TO PUBLIC

ORDER POSED BY HOLDING OF FOUR RALLIES AT TIME OF PUBLIC TENSION. HE SAID GOVERNMENT UNABLE GUARANTEE THAT RALLIES WOULD NOT BE INFILTRATED BY PROVOCATEURS. HE SAID GOP WOULD PROBABLY HAVE APPROVED ORIGINAL PS AND PCP RALLIES BUT ADDITION OF OTHER RALLIES MADE CANCELLATION NECESSARY.

TENSION AND LABOR LAW

2. ALVES ATTRIBUTED PUBLIC TENSION TO "FEELING OF UNCERTAINTY" ARISING FROM HEATED AND ANGRY DEBATE OVER PROPOSED UNITARY LABOR ORGANIZATION LAW. ALVES DENIED "RUMORS" THAT COUNCIL OF TWENTY WAS NOT UNANIMOUS IN APPROVING LAW, WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED AS BEING WITHIN PURVIEW OF AFM'S GOAL OF ACHIEVING GREATER SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR LESS PRIVILEGED CLASSES. AFM CONSIDERED UNITARY STRUCTURE TO BE IN WORKERS' INTERESTS AS IT WOULD AVOID PARTISAN BATTLES BETWEEN UNIONS. PARTY CONFLICT OVER LAW'S TERMS CONSTITUTES "FRONTAL IDEOLOGICAL SHOCK" BETWEEN COALITION PARTNERS BRINGING TO LIGHT FOR FIRST TIME WHOLLY NATURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEM; THIS DOES NOT MEAN PORTUGAL EXPERIENCING CLIMATE OF CIVIL WAR.

REPORTS TO THE NATION

3. ALVES STATED PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES WOULD SHORTLY ANNOUNCE DATE FOR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS; WITHOUT SPECIFYING PURPOSE OF TALK, ALVES SAID PRIME MINISTER GONCALVES WOULD SOON ADDRESS NATION; MUCH AWAITED REPORT ON EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER 28 IS NOW BEING CONSIDERED BY COUNCIL OF TWENTY; GOVERNMENT'S COMMENTS ON JANUARY 25 WEEKEND ATTACK ON CDS CONGRESS IN OPORTO WILL BE WITHHELD UNTIL INVESTIGATION COMPLETED.

NATO EXERCISE "LOCKED GATE"

4. ALVES CALLED SCHEDULED NATO EXERCISE (REF B) "ROUTINE", NOTED THAT IT HAD BEEN SCHEDULED TWO YEARS AGO, AND SAID MILITARY CHIEFS OF STAFF HAD FOUND IT NEITHER NECESSARY NOR APPROPRIATE TO CANCEL EXERCISE.

GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL CHANGES

5. ADMIRAL ROSA COUTINHO IS TO RESUME SEAT ON NATIONAL SALVATION JUNTA TEMPORARILY ABANDONED WHILE SERVING AS GOVERNOR OF ANGOLA. ALVES DENIED THAT PERSONNEL CHANGES ARE IN WIND IN REGARD TO EITHER AFM COORDINATING COMMITTEE OR PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CULTURAL DYNAMIZATION

6. QUESTIONS RAISED BY FOREIGN JOURNALISTS CONCERNING MOTIVATION BEHIND ARMED FORCES' CULTURAL DYNAMIZATION CAMPAIGN IN RURAL AREAS DREW DENIAL THAT THIS IS AFM ATTEMPT TO "MANIPULATE"MASSES. ALVES JUSTIFIED CAMPAIGN ON BASIS PERVASIVE DEPOLITICIZATION OF COUNTRYSIDE AFTER HALF-CENTURY OF FASCISM.

7. COMMENT: FOREIGN JOURNALISTS PARTICULARLY PURSUED SUBJECTS OF JAN 31 RALLIES AND CULTURAL DYNAMIZATION CAMPAIGN. ALVES' RESPONSES TO THESE QUESTIONS INDICATE GOP SENSITIVITY TO CRITICISM/SCRUTINY OF PORTUGUESE INTERNAL EVENTS BY FOREIGN PRESS. ALVES HANDLES PRESS WITH APLOMB, IS FAST ON HIS FEET, ARTICULATE, AND QUITE ABLE TO JUSTIFY SOMETHING PUBLICLY (I.E., NEW LABOR LAW FOR EXAMPLE) WHICH HE PROBABLY DOES NOT PERSONALLY SUPPORT. CARLUCCI

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